far been taken for commercial discovery of hydro-carbons in West Bengal and what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): Exploration work for hydrocarbon prospecting in West Bengal has been continuing since 1949. The details of exploration work done in West Bengal are as under:

Drilling		
No. of Wells drilled	26	(including 10 by Indo-Stanvac Petroleum Project)
No. of wells under drilling	3	
Surveys		
Seismic (SLK+GLK)	37,500	(including 7,700 by Indo-Stanvac Petroleum Project)
Geological (Sq. KM equivalent of Semi detailed mapping)	8,800	
Gravity Magnetic No. of Stations)	47,200	

No commercial discovery of hydrocarbons has been made so far in West Bengal.

1433. [Transferred to the 18th August, 1988]

Coal Washeries and Coal Slurry in the River Bed

1434. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are 7 coal washeries by the side of River Damodar in Bihar;

(b) if so, what is their total capacity;

(c) whether it is a fact that considerable quantum of coal turned into 'fires' is deposited as 'Slurry' in the river bed:

(d) whether it is also a fact that powerful agencies are operating to get control over these 'slurries' in which the contractors and some BCCL officials are interested; and

(e) whether it is a fact that from the 'slurry' 55-60 per cent of fire coal with 15-16 per cent ash content is recoverable?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There are 7 coal washeries situated near the Damodar River. Their total operable capacity is about 13.25 million tonnes per annum of raw coal.

(c) No, Sir. During the rainy season, however, small quantities of coal fines that escape recovery at the washery end find their way through the nallahs into river.

(d) No, Sir. Contractors are engaged by Bharat Coking Coal Ltd., through open tender system for a specified period for extracting coal fines from the slurry settling ponds.

(e) Yes, Sir. This is, however, possible only if the slurry is subjected to froth floatation process and not by the ordinary settling ponds method.

Development of Formed Coke Technology

1435. DR. R. K. PODDAR: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Formed Coke Technology developed by CFRI, Dhanbad is not being promoted by Government; and

(b) if not, what steps have been taken to produce formed coke indigenously to save foreign exchange?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) and (b) Central Fuel Research Institute has developed the technology for production of formed coke on a pilot plant scale. Formed coke produced on the basis of this technology was tested in low shaft blast furnaces of Kalinga Iron Works, Barbil (Orissa)

and Indian Iron and Steel Company at Kulti. However, the technology has yet to be upgraded to an economically viable commercial venture.

Steel Authority of India is going in for research and development to develop a suitable technology for production of formed coke for use in ductile iron production based on CFRI technology.

Reduction of Coal Supply to DPL, Durgapur

1436. DR. R. K. PODDAR: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that BCCL has reduced its supply of coal to DPL, Durgapur sometime back;

(b) if so, when and to what extent;

(c) what was the estimated loss as a result thereof;

(d) what were the reasons for such reduction;

(e) whether the cut has been restored; and

(f) if so, since when?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE(: (a) No; Sir. There has been no reduction in supplies of coking coal to D.P.L., Durgapur. During January to July, 1988 two lakh tonnes of coking coal was supplied as against 88,000 tonnes during the same period of the previous year.

(b) to (f) Do not arise.

Import of Polymer from Yugoslavia

@1437. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to import polymer from Yugoslavia; and

(b) if so, the total quantum of polymer proposed to be imported from that country during the year 1988-89?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGAL RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Quantities have not been firmed up yet.

Subsidence of Raniganj Coalfields

1438. *SHRI NARAYAN KAR:* Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that West Bengal Government has approached the Central Government for controlling the problem of subsidence in Raniganj coalfield areas;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what action has been taken by the Central Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The West Bengal Government referred to the subsidence proned areas identified by Director General of Mines Safety and requested planning and implementation of measures for controlling subsidence.

(c) Raniganj area has been witnessing occurrences of land subsidence over the last several years. This is due to unscientific method of coal exploitation practised in the pre-nationalisation days.

As early as in 1950, the Director General of Mines Safety declared 40 places as unsafe for habitation in the Burdwan District of West Bengal. Construction activities have been prohibited in 25 of these areas. A number of steps are being taken by Asansol-Durgapur Development Authority and Eastern Coalfields Limited to combat the problems of subsidence.

@Previously Unstarred Question 709, *transferred from* the 2nd August, 1988.